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24 March 1970

[REDACTED]

With regard to the several questions you raised concerning research in OSS documents in other Agencies:

- a. How do "Unofficial Researchers" gain access to classified OSS documents?

An "Unofficial Researcher" is a student, professional writer, researcher, historian, or so forth who has obtained a SECRET Security Clearance to do research in classified documents in National Archives, Presidential Libraries, or Federal Records Centers. "Official Researchers" are those employed by a Government Agency.

The Unofficial Research Program is covered in Army Regulation 341-1 and grows from President Eisenhower's Executive Order #10816 urging the Department of Defense to facilitate research in classified files by trustworthy citizens.

The clearance procedure is the same used for civilian employees in the Army. It involves a Personal History Statement, Fingerprints, a 14-year check on background, employers, and family, and so forth. Fort Holabird does the checking, and it requires 4 to 6 months. About 40 requests are processed per year.

The research is never in current records and does not involve anything later than Korea, so far. The final clearance specifies that it is for Army originated material only and that release of documents from other Government Agencies must have their approval. National Archives permits cleared researchers to review and take notes from classified material, but nothing may be taken out until Archives contacts the Departments concerned for a release. National Archives does assist them in their research and processing the release requests to Agencies.

The Adjutant General's Office reviews the requests to declassify Army material. They reject many requests, release some, and censor or delete portions of others. Citations of Joint Chiefs of Staff document numbers and references are usually deleted. If the originator of a document, found in an Army file, disapproves its release, TAGO is not inclined to question the decision.

State has restricted use of material from 1938 thru 1945 and requires clearances and controlled research. Files prior to 1938 are open to the public. Navy, Air Force, and State also have clearance procedures which involve Fort Holabird, but Army feels they are not as strict as the Army requirements.

b. How does this mesh with DCI memo on OSS Archives?

The DCI memo grew out of his consultations with the General Counsel and a DDI study. The SSU provided some of the language for Mr. Proctor's study as well as for the DCI's response. An SSU reference to an OGC opinion from the 1950's led to his involvement. The SSU is very satisfied to have the DCI on paper about their Program. They are quite happy with the procedures and relationships with other Agencies.

c. Should the substance of DCI memo be communicated to the Army and State?

I would say no. The controls at State and Army are working and are everything we could ask. We have nothing to gain by sending them the memo, and the additional circulation may stimulate some unwarranted publicity.

d. Should OSS documents held elsewhere be looked at again to determine whether we should obtain custody of all of them?

I believe the only OSS material outside the Agency is interfiled in old files of other Agencies. It would be physically impossible to screen them all. Further, Archivists and Historians would not permit such damage to the integrity of those files. The roar would be terrible and the problem can never be eliminated completely. Researchers will continue to come upon OSS correspondence all over the world, and we have contacts wherever possible.

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e. Should we ask [REDACTED] these questions?

I think you should discuss the DCI memo with him and perhaps get a feeling of his concern or comfort as to the status of OSS files in the Records Center and other Agencies.

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I see no problems and my procedures with [REDACTED] Executive Secretary, SSU, are working fine. They want to handle each case separately and are not inclined to any broad release or additional controls.

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The only new policy we will seek will be to move the OSS materials from the DDP Inactive Office Record category into the Archives. At present [REDACTED] is resisting that proposal.

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DDS/SSS/RAB [REDACTED] :mrf (24 Mar 1970)